

B-1083

Henry James Lumber Company

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The set of structures located on the 900 block of Aliceanna Street in Fells Point, today the warehouses of the Horstmeier Lumber Company, once housed part of the Henry James Lumber Company, and includes that company's two fine office buildings. Since the 18th century sawmills, woodworking plants, and lumber yards have been common in Baltimore, particularly along the waterfront east of the Back Basin. The Horstmeier Company and Henry James Company were among the oldest and largest wood product establishments in the United States in the late 1800s, and were instrumental in introducing southern pine to the nationwide market. This soft, cheap, durable wood revolutionized the domestic housing industry and made Baltimore a center of the American lumber trade.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

B-1083
MAGI# 0410835414

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Henry James Lumber Company

AND/OR COMMON

Horstmeier Lumber Company

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER 900 block Aliceanna Street

CITY, TOWN Baltimore

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

— VICINITY OF

STATE Maryland

COUNTY

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

☐ DISTRICT
☒ BUILDING(S)
☐ STRUCTURE
☐ SITE
☐ OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

☐ PUBLIC
☒ PRIVATE
☐ BOTH
PUBLIC ACQUISITION
☐ IN PROCESS
☐ BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

☒ OCCUPIED
☐ UNOCCUPIED
☐ WORK IN PROGRESS
ACCESSIBLE
☒ YES: RESTRICTED
☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED
☐ NO

PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE ☐ MUSEUM
☐ COMMERCIAL ☐ PARK
☐ EDUCATIONAL ☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE
☐ ENTERTAINMENT ☐ RELIGIOUS
☐ GOVERNMENT ☐ SCIENTIFIC
☒ INDUSTRIAL ☐ TRANSPORTATION
☐ MILITARY ☐ OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Horstmeier Lumber Company

Telephone #: 301-752-0532

STREET & NUMBER

301 East Falls Road

CITY, TOWN

Baltimore

— VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

Maryland 21202

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Baltimore City Courthouse

Liber #: MLP 9753

Folio #: 331

STREET & NUMBER

Calvert & Fayette Streets

CITY, TOWN

Baltimore,

STATE

Maryland

21202

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

— FEDERAL — STATE — COUNTY — LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

B-1093

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		DATE '80

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Horstmeier Lumber Company has two locations in southeast Baltimore. The original location, dates from the late nineteenth century, and occupies a site in the 300 block of East Falls Avenue. The second location, the former Henry James Lumber Company, occupies the 900 block of Aliceanna Street. Both sites are on the waterfront and are served by the railroad as well. These factors were important elements in the development of the lumber industry in Baltimore.

The storage facilities of the Horstmeier Lumber Company are contained in the block bounded by the 900 blocks of Aliceanna and Lancaster Streets and the 700 blocks of South Exeter and South Albemarle Streets. At this point in southeast, Lancaster Street faces the water; and railroad service is available from Exeter Street. The south side of this block, which formed a part of the Henry James Lumber Company, is occupied by three attached wooden warehouses; the north side of the block has two brick office buildings.

In this complex, the obvious attention to styled detail in the office areas as opposed to the vernacular quality of the warehouses clearly illustrates the difference between the areas that were accessible to the general public and those areas which were used exclusively for the storage and manufacture of lumber. The three attached warehouses are rectangular in shape, and have a north/south orientation. All three of these warehouses have a large garage door in the south facade which faces Lancaster Street. The exterior of these warehouses is wooden board and batten.

The western warehouse, which appears to have been built around the turn of the century, is probably the oldest. It has a wooden roof which slants slightly to the west. This roof is supported by a series of wooden trestle-like structures, and was later reinforced by steel posts and beams along the midline. The interior of this one story warehouse is completely open. There is a garage door on the north facade which compliments the opening in the south facade. This area is presently used for storage.

Directly east of the N.E. corner of this structure, there is a two story, red brick office building which appears to have been built in the late nineteenth century. The north facade of this structure is 3 bays wide and faces Aliceanna Street. Each

cont'd

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)		
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION				

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Since the 18th century sawmills, woodworking plants, lumber yards and shipyards were common in Baltimore City -- particularly along the waterfront east of the Back Basin. The Horstmeier Company and one of its components, the Henry James Company, were among the oldest and largest wood product establishments in the United States during the late 1800s. Horstmeier was instrumental in introducing southern pine to the nationwide market. This soft, cheap, durable wood revolutionized the domestic housing industry and made Baltimore a center of the American lumber trade.

Historical Significance

The James Lumber Company, once located on Aliceanna Street in Fells Point, represents only one of the numerous lumber firms which operated in Baltimore. Sawmills, woodworking plants, lumber yards and shipyards were common in the city, particularly along the waterfront east of the Back Basin, throughout the 18th, 19th and early 20th centuries. Firms like James introduced southern pine to a nationwide market. This soft, cheap, durable wood revolutionized the domestic housing industry and made Baltimore the center of the American lumber trade.

In 1843, Henry James moved to Baltimore and began a lumber industry on Aliceanna Street in Fells Point. Capitalizing on Baltimore's excellent harbor and proximity to timber sources in nearby Pennsylvania and the Eastern shore, James and his son, N. W., greatly expanded their operation throughout the mid 1800's. By 1881, the firm had several British as well as American partners, making it one of the largest establishments of its type in the United States. The Henry James Lumber Company (later the N. W. James Company) owned additional property and mills in northern

Cont'd--

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Interview with Mr. J. Wilkens, Bowie Smith Lumber Co. (276-1000)
 Vertical & query files, Enoch Pratt Central Library, Baltimore
 Scharf, History of Baltimore City & County (Phil, 1881), p.462
 Baltimore American, History of City of Baltimore (1902), p.426.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

David O'Conner

ORGANIZATION

Baltimore Industrial Museum

DATE

July 1980

STREET & NUMBER

217 North Charles Street

TELEPHONE

301-396-1931

CITY OR TOWN

Baltimore

STATE

Maryland 21201

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust
 The Shaw House, 21 State Circle
 Annapolis, Maryland 21401
 (301) 267-1438

bay of this facade is divided by a brick pilaster which is capped by a simple wooden capital; the two central pilasters have star-shaped fittings for the structure's tie rods. These tie rods help give support to this building since it has a steep, shed roof. This building is in severe decay.

South of this brick structure, there are two attached wooden warehouses which occupy the formerly open yard storage area. These were built in 1911, after a fire. They have slightly arched wooden roofs and each roof is supported by a series of 12 modified Howe trusses with arched top chords. A longitudinal stiffener runs through the center of the building connecting the trusses. The interiors of these buildings are completely open, except for the northeast corner of the eastern warehouse where a second office building juts into the space. The south and west facade of this office building can be seen from inside the warehouse.

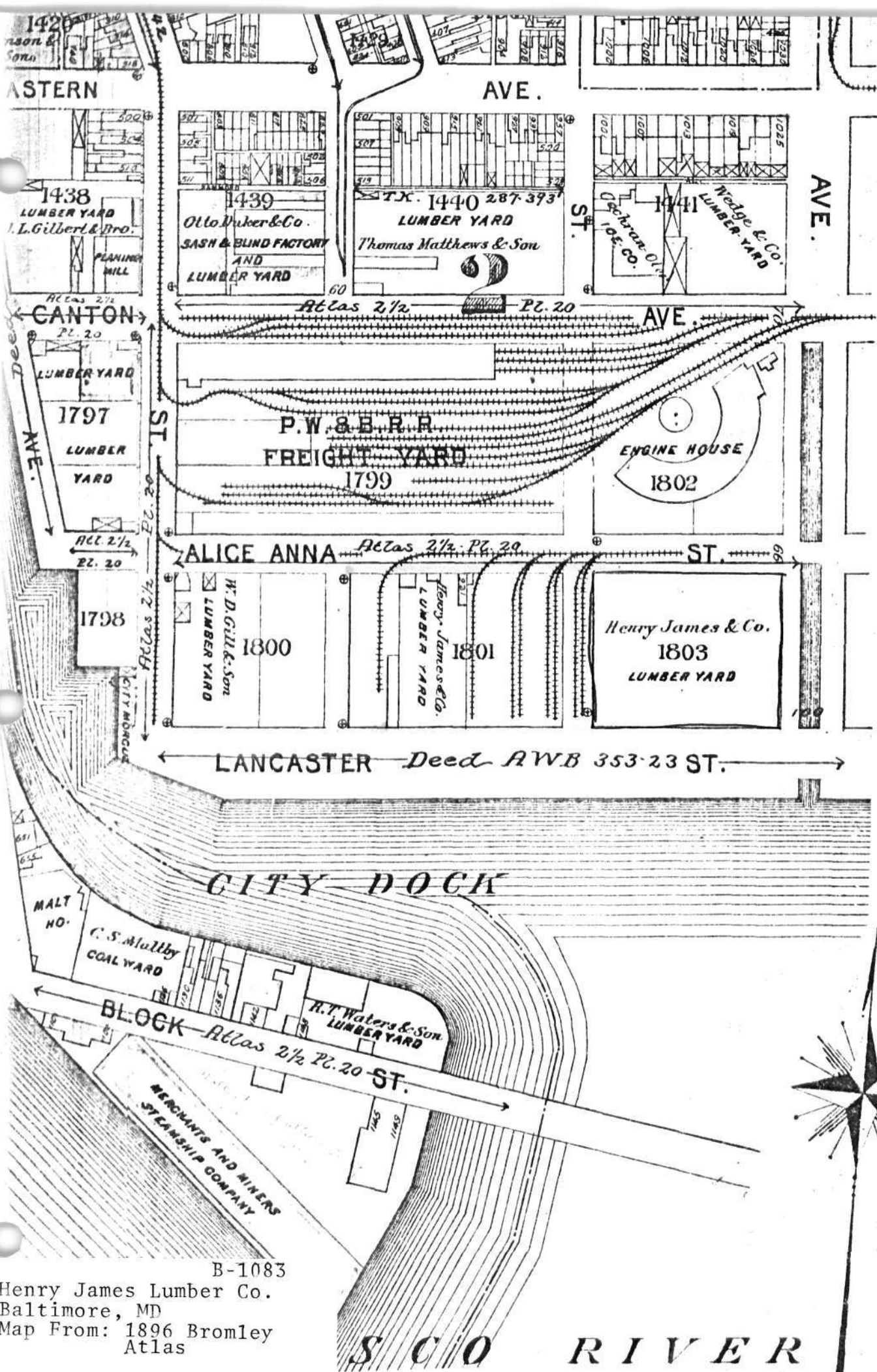
This office building, which is 2 stories with a flat roof, dates from the early twentieth century. The north facade, is of brick masonry construction, 3 bays wide and faces Aliceanna Street; the brick is a hard glazed yellow type characteristic of the 1920's and 30's. The east and center bays of the first floor have a 6/6 window with a flat brownstone lintel and sill. The west bay has a wood paneled door with a transom and brownstone lintel. Each bay of the second level is occupied by a 6/6 sash window with a brownstone lintel. Above these windows are 2 brownstone stringcourses and a tin cornice with dental moulding. The west facade is identical, except there is no door. The east facade is made of plain red brick with a 6/6, segmentally arched window in the southern bay. This building is two rooms deep, abandoned and in disrepair.

Maryland and Pennsylvania but their Baltimore firm dealt primarily with the shipping and processing of "raw" lumber for commercial use in the construction and shipping industries.

Throughout the late 19th and early 20th centuries lumber companies prospered as wartime demands and increasing urbanization insured a steady market for lumber. In early 1940, another local lumber industry, the F. Bowie Smith Lumber Company, bought the James waterfront property. The James Company then became (and remains) a "paper company", i.e., a company which retains its name but ceases all manufacturing operations.

Until 1965, several different firms rented the warehouses on the James property from F. Bowie Smith as storage facilities for newly cut lumber. At that time, the Horstmeier Lumber Company, incorporated in 1902 under John Galvin, rented several warehouses. These are still used by the company for storage and processing of "soft wood products"-- particularly ponderosa, sugar pine and redwood from the American West.

Continuity is the most significant aspect of the James site and company history. Since at least 1843, and probably well before that, a wood products firm has continually operated at the waterfront location on Aliceanna Street.



B-1083

Henry James Lumber Co.
Baltimore, MD
Map From: 1896 Bromley
Atlas



B-1083

Henry James Lumber Company

U.S.G.S. 7.5# Baltimore E. Quad

18³62000⁴³ 49160



B-1083

Henry James Lumber Co.

Baltimore, MD

Photo: Ann Steele

Neg. Loc.: MD Historic

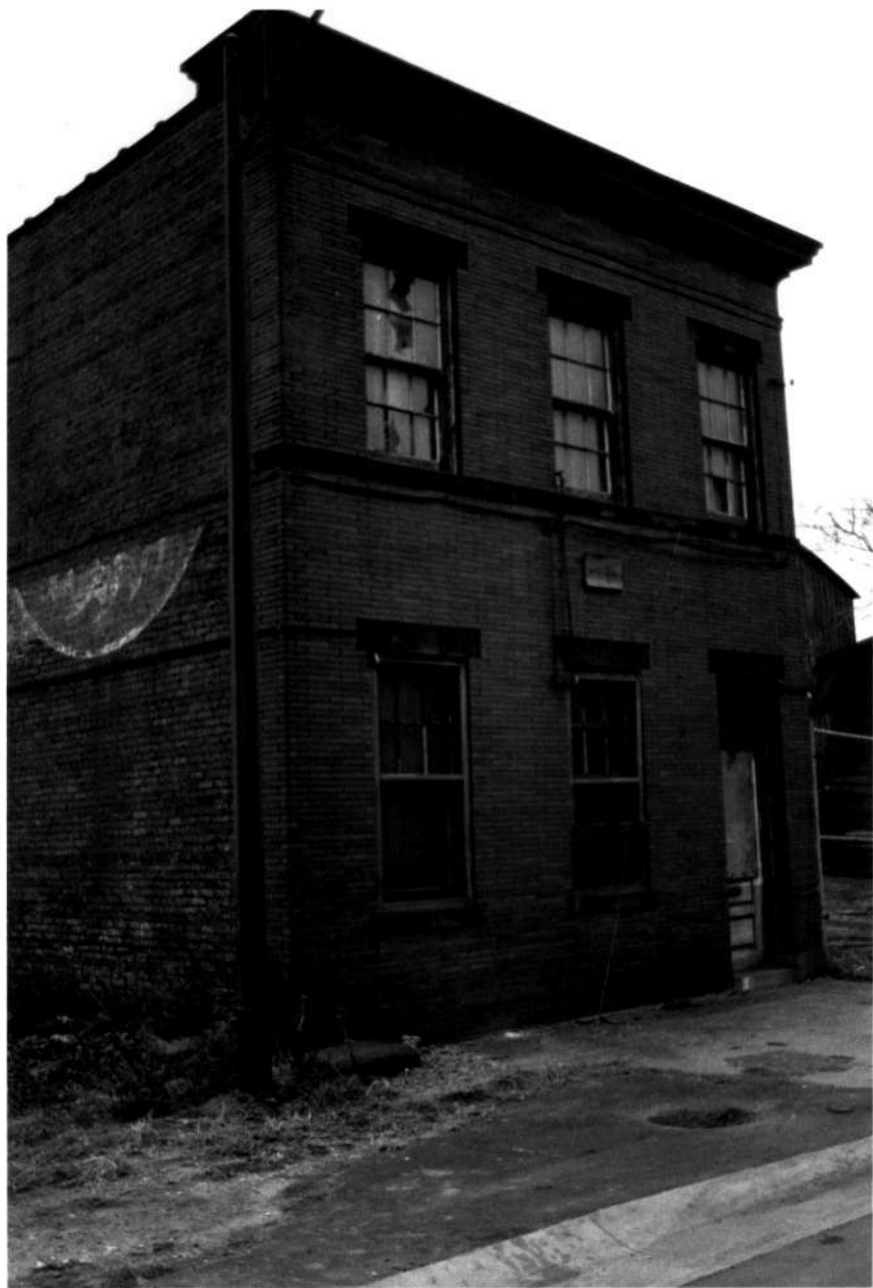
12/80

Trust

Aliceanna Street - Looking SW



B-1083
Henry James Lumber Co.
Baltimore, MD
Photo: Ann Steeler
Neg. Loc: MID Historic Trust
Dec. 1980 / Aliceanna St. - looking SW



B-1083

Henry James Lumber Co.

Baltimore, MD

Photo: Ann Steele

Neg. Loc. MD Historic Trust

Dec. 1980 / Office bld., looking SW



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Henry James Lumber Co.

Baltimore, MD

Photo: Ann Steele

Neg. Loc. MD Historic Trust

Dec. 1980 / Looking SW



B-1083

Henry James Lumber Co.

Baltimore, MD

Photo: Ann Steele

Neg. Loc.:MD Historic Trust

Dec. 1980

Warehouses, Lancaster Street,
looking NE



B-1083

Henry James Lumber Co.

Baltimore, MD

Photo: Ann Steele

Neg. Loc.:MD Historic Trust

Dec. 1980 /Interior, warehouse